

PUBLIC STATED PREFERENCES FOR PHARMACEUTICAL FUNDING DECISIONS

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Background: In Portugal, the pharmaceutical consumption is subsidized by public resources, mostly through a reimbursement system. The elicitation of public preferences to support policy decisions is gaining emphasis and popularity within the healthcare sector. There is growing recognition that Discrete Choice Experiments (DCEs) can provide more than information on preferences. They have the potential to contribute more directly to outcome measurement for use in economic evaluation. Determining which criterion the population prioritizes for the allocation of public resources is particularly pertinent in countries where public funds arise from taxes. It is believed that, by understanding public preferences, public policy-makers can conduct resources towards those healthcare technologies which are likely to result in the greatest overall societal benefit. Besides, marketers can tailor pharmaceutical offerings that appeal to the public and to relevant pharmaceutical funding bodies when making submissions, thus increasing the likelihood of receiving public funding support.

Objective: Little is known about the preferences of the public for pharmaceutical funding in Portugal. This study aims to understand public preferences for allocating resources for pharmaceuticals in Portugal.

Methods: A DCE will be applied to a convenience sample of citizens of Braga. The choice-sets are based on four attributes (severity of the disease for which the treatments are indicated, Portuguese prevalence of the disease, medicine's efficacy and government cost per person treated). Data will be analyzed using the conditional logit regression model.

Key-words: pharmaceuticals funding, pharmaceuticals reimbursement, stated preferences, discrete choice experiment, Portugal.